



Montgomery County Council

From the Office of Councilmember Tom Perez

For Immediate Release

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Statement of County Councilmember Tom Perez Regarding Governor Ehrlich's Announcements on the Inner Purple Line and the Corridor Cities Transitway

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"I am heartened by Governor Ehrlich's announcement of support for building the Inner Purple Line from Bethesda to New Carrollton and the Corridor Cities Transitway. He has correctly recognized that in order to end gridlock in Montgomery County, we must invest more in our mass transit infrastructure. I applaud his commitment to these two vitally important projects. With his announcement today, the Inner Purple Line is one step closer to reality.

"I understand that Governor Ehrlich is considering bus rapid transit as a possible alternative to rapid transit. While I support Light Rail, and believe that it will prove to be the most cost-effective mode of transportation for both the Inner Purple Line and the Corridor Cities Transitway, bus rapid transit is an intriguing concept that merits further study. There is no place in the United States where this mode is being used, so it may be difficult to assess the environmental impact and overall cost effectiveness. But it is certainly worth a good look, and this study will cause no more than minimal delay.

"Regarding the Inner Purple Line, I am particularly heartened that the Georgetown branch alignment remains squarely in the mix, and I commend Governor Ehrlich for this sound decision. Montgomery County purchased the right of way along the Georgetown branch alignment with the express purpose of using it for light rail and a hiker/biker trail. This project is all dressed up and ready to go. We can begin construction as early as 2005 on the Georgetown branch alignment, and be moving people and easing gridlock by 2008.

"I understand that an alternative alignment is being considered along Jones Mill and Jones Bridge Roads, which is being championed by Delegate John Hurson.
(more...)

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“He offered a very similar proposal two years ago. It was studied and rejected because it is much more costly, will eliminate lanes on already crowded streets, and create homeland security problems by going through sensitive property at the National Institutes of Health and Bethesda Naval Hospital.

“This proposal will never pass muster under federal requirements, and studying it again would delay construction of the Inner Purple Line by at least two years. Restudying an alignment that costs more and lengthens commuting times for transit riders and cars is not necessary.

“I look forward to working with Governor Ehrlich, and federal and state officials to make the Inner Purple Line a reality, and I applaud his continuing interest in this project.”

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